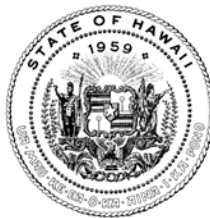


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
CARTY S. CHANG
Interim Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
OCEAN, MARINE RESOURCES, AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**Wednesday, March 25, 2015
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of
HOUSE RESOLUTION 32
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO
PROMOTE GREATER AWARENESS OF OCEAN SAFETY MEASURES FOR
INDIVIDUALS WHO GATHER OR HARVEST OPIHI**

House Resolution 32 requests the Department of Land and Natural Resources (“Department”) to promote greater awareness of the use of safety measures for those persons who are collecting opihi. **The Department offers the following comments.**

The Department recognizes the tragedies associated with the collecting of opihi and the human toll that has resulted over the years. Opihi pickers are especially aware of these dangers and take precautions they feel are necessary to ensure their safety. While the Department can appreciate the desire to improve on safety, the ocean is an inherently risky and dangerous environment. Requiring opihi pickers to carry floatation devices, 200 feet of rope, and a communication device may increase their resistance to waves and increase their chances of being washed off the rocks that they are clinging to. Lastly, the Department does not have sufficient information to advise opihi pickers that these measures would be adequate to ensure their safety in all situations.

CARTY S. CHANG
INTERIM CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

DAN S. QUINN
INTERIM FIRST DEPUTY

W. ROY HARDY
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

omhtestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
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Subject: *Submitted testimony for HR32 on Mar 25, 2015 09:00AM*

HR32

Submitted on: 3/21/2015

Testimony for OMH on Mar 25, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Erik Vuong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**Department of Land and Natural Resources
Aha Moku Advisory Committee
State of Hawaii
Post Office Box 621
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809**

Testimony of
Leimana DaMate
Executive Director

LATE

Before the House Committee on
Ocean, Marine Resources and Hawaiian Affairs

Wednesday, March 25, 2015
9:00 A.M.
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

**In Consideration of
House Resolution 32
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO PROMOTE GREATER
AWARENESS OF OCEAN SAFETY MEASURES FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO GATHER OR
HARVEST OPIHI**

HR 32 requests the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to promote greater awareness of the use of safety measures for those persons who are collecting opihi. **The Aha Moku offers the following comments.**

Opihi is considered to be more than a delicacy for the native Hawaiian. It is really a staple of their diet and has been for centuries. It is very rare for a Hawaiian practitioner to come to harm while harvesting opihi simply because they know in site-specific areas when and where to harvest safely. This knowledge has been shared with the local population of each island. The problem is that because the demand now for opihi is so great, the supply has diminished significantly on each island causing opihi harvesters to attempt to harvest in areas normally known to be dangerous by the local communities.

Native Hawaiian lawai'a (fishing or gathering practitioners) harvest opihi according to a lunar calendar or season of their ahupua'a or moku. Each place is different according to the geography of the area. The safety of the harvester would depend on their knowledge of the place where they are picking opihi, the time of year, how the currents of the area flow and many other variables one must know to safely harvest opihi and other marine resources. We agree with some of the suggestions listed in HR 32 such as gathering with a partner and informing others of their whereabouts. However, one should never attempt to pick opihi if one does not know the area, the currents or how to swim.

Being attached to DLNR, the Aha Moku will share site-specific native knowledge of areas with the department. However, even having this knowledge will not guarantee the safety of opihi harvesters who risk the danger simply because the trade is so lucrative.